

Information and Technology Track

Getting Information to People in Forms They Can Use and Understand Workshop

Window to My Environment Office of Environmental Information U.S. EPA

“Window to My Environment” is a dynamic internet mapping application that provides access to environmental conditions in a users community of choice. This application demonstrates the power of integrating regulatory and ambient data by geography through interactive maps and visualization tools. The three major components of this application include: interactive maps for viewing regulated facilities, monitoring sites, watershed information, and demographics along with traditional geographic data; interesting facts and statistics about conditions within each map displayed; and links to Federal, State, or Local data through a geoservices component of an Integrated Geodata Server to provide access to environmental information (i.e. status of local air quality, water quality, etc.) “Window to My Environment” is a proof-of-concept application prototyped for Region III and the Mid-Atlantic States.

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Changing the Face of the EPA Web Site

PROBLEM:

Users had trouble finding information on the EPA Web site. Navigation/Browsability was not very intuitive, being, in many cases, an organization-centered approach. Search results were overwhelming in numbers, and the listing of retrievals did not correlate directly to the relevance of each.

SOLUTION:

Infrastructure was enhanced to provide easier browsing capabilities and to support better search results. It also allows for better management of the contents of the site. An expanded "news" feature became part of the top level page

RESULTS:

Positive comments from the users. Better search results. Increased number of visitors, and of pages requested.

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